

CONSTITUTION
Revised February 1, 2015

ARTICLE 1: NAME

This body shall be known as EMMANUEL BAPTIST CHURCH of Great Cacapon, West Virginia 25422. We shall be affiliated with the Tri-County Baptist Association of West Virginia, the Southern Baptist Convention of West Virginia, and the Southern Baptist Convention.

The mission of EMMANUEL BAPTIST CHURCH shall be to:

- a) Be a fellowship of believers brought together by the leadership of the Holy Spirit
- b) Provide meaningful worship services of prayer, praise, and proclaiming the infallible word of God.
- c) Present the plan of salvation of faith and grace of Jesus Christ alone and to share this Good News with all means possible in our community.
- d) Support missions throughout the work in the association and conventions to which we belong.
- e) Educate and cultivate the members into spiritual maturity.
- f) Seek to guide others into discovering, cultivating, and developing the use of spiritual gifts in service to the glory of God.
- g) Respond with God's love to the needs of the church fellowship and community of Morgan County.

ARTICLE 2: CHURCH COVENANT

We, as followers of our Lord Jesus Christ, having been saved and baptized, enter into this covenant with one another. We covenant together for the mutual edification of the individual believer, and to bring glory to God as we serve Him as a unified body. (Rom. 15:5-6)

We acknowledge that attending church services alone is insufficient for proper spiritual growth. We further acknowledge that the gathering together for worship on the Lord's Day and other set times should be supplemental to the ongoing Bible study, prayer, and worship conducted daily in our homes. Therefore, we hereby covenant with one another to encourage each other towards family devotions and to promote personal worship in our homes as well as corporately at the appointed times of gathering. (Duet 11: 18-21; Heb. 10:25)

We acknowledge that the responsibility to train children to know and revere God rests primarily on the parents and family of that child. We further acknowledge that God has brought many individual families and singles together to create a unified body of believers, the family of God. Therefore, we covenant together: family to family; person to person, to help one another in this responsibility of raising children in the way they should go that when they grow old they might not depart from it. We agree to assist in

the teaching, training, and guiding of each others children, to help bring them to their full potential in Jesus Christ (Eph. 2:19-20; Prov. 22:6)

We acknowledge that it pleased God to call us, not only to an individual relationship with Himself through Christ, but also to join us together with other believers for mutual encouragement and spiritual growth. We know that scripture teaches us to "carry our own load" but also teaches us to "bear each others burdens". Therefore, we enter into covenant with each other to be both burden bearers and burden sharers. We agree to ask each other for help when we need help. We also agree to offer help when we are asked or when the need for help is perceived. This includes needs, both physical and spiritual. (Eph. 4:28; Gal. 6:2; Gal. 6:5; 1 John 3:17)

We know that God has called us to "be holy because He is holy". Therefore we covenant together, as God's people, to walk in God's ways and to live a life worthy of our calling. We further acknowledge that we who are in Christ have been forgiven our sins through His atoning sacrifice on the cross and are now seen as sinless in God's eyes. We know that we have not yet been made perfect and from time to time, in our weakness, we commit sin. Therefore, we enter into this covenant, inviting others to lovingly confront us if we are found to be in sin. We agree that we will remain approachable when others come to confront us. We further agree to lovingly confront other covenant members when necessary. If problems arise between covenant members, we agree to handle the matter quickly and biblically. We will follow the outlined process for relationship restoration as Jesus prescribed in Matthew 18:15-20. (1 Tim 3:14-15; Eph. 4:25-26; Gal 6:1)

We acknowledge that the Lord has called us together to reach out to a lost and hurting world with both the love of God and the gospel of Christ Therefore. we enter into covenant with each other, to work as a unified local body of believers, towards the goal of reaching every person within our sphere of influence with the good news of Jesus Christ As Christ's servants we agree to enter into ministry with one another as we bring comfort to the hurting, healing to the wounded, food to the hungry, and the gospel of salvation to the lost We acknowledge that this is a God sized task that will require a congregation of committed individuals. Therefore, we hereby commit ourselves and our resources to God's ongoing work as He leads and directs us in our services, programs, and activities. (Matt. 25:34-40; 2 Cor. 5:20)

ARTICLE 3: ARTICLES OF FAITH

In the affirmation of our faith, we believe that Christianity is supernatural in its origin and history. Therefore, many of the truths stated on our Articles of Faith can only be apprehended and understood by faith. Although our faith is also based upon reason, it is through faith that we come to understand "the deep things of God". By faith, in Christ, we are brought into a living relationship to God through a divine encounter with God in human experience.

Furthermore, may it be stated that:

(1) These statements of faith arc intended for the general instruction and guidance of our own people concerning those articles of the Christian faith which are most surely held among us. They are not intended to add anything to the simple conditions of salvation revealed in the New Testament, viz., repentance towards God and faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord.

(2) That we do not regard them as complete statements of our faith, having any quality of finality or infallibility. Future Baptists are free to revise their statements of faith anytime they deem it wise and necessary.

(3) That the sole authority for faith and practice among Baptists is the scriptures of the Old and New Testaments. Confessions are only guides in interpretation, having no authority over the conscience.

(4) That we profess a living faith and this faith is rooted and grounded in Jesus Christ who is "the same yesterday, and today and forever". Therefore, He is our sole authority for faith and practice whose will is revealed in the Holy Scriptures.

(5) And that a living faith must experience a growing understanding of truth and must be continually interpreted and related to the needs of each new generation.

As Baptists, we emphasize the soul's competency before God, freedom in religion and the priesthood of the believer.

It is the purpose of his statement of faith to set forth certain teachings which we believe.

Section 1: The Scriptures

The Holy Bible was originally written by men divinely inspired and is God's revelation of Himself to man. It is a perfect treasure of divine instruction. It has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter. Therefore, all Scripture is totally true and trustworthy. It reveals the principles by which God judges us: and therefore is, and will remain to the end of the world, the true center of Christian union, and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds and religious opinions should be tried. All Scripture is a testimony to Christ, who is Himself the focus of divine revelation.

Section 2: God

There is one and only one living and true God. He is an intelligent, spiritual, and personal Being, the Creator, Redeemer, Preserver, and Ruler of the universe. God is infinite in holiness and all other perfections. God is all powerful and all knowing; and His perfect knowledge extends to all things, past, present, and future, including the future decisions of His free creatures. To Him we owe the highest love, reverence, and obedience. The eternal God reveals Himself to us as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, with distinct personal attributes, but without division of nature, essence, or being.

A. God the Father

God as Father reigns with providential care over His universe, His creatures, and the flow of the stream of human history according to the purposes of His grace. He is all powerful, all knowing, all loving, and all wise. God is Father in truth to those who become children of God through faith in Jesus Christ. He is fatherly in His attitude toward all men.

B. God the Son

Christ is the eternal Son of God. In His incarnation as Jesus Christ, he was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. Jesus perfectly revealed and did the will of God, taking upon Himself human nature with its demands and necessities and identifying Himself completely with mankind yet without sin. He honored the divine law by His personal obedience, and in His substitutionary death on the cross. He made provision for the redemption of men from sin. He was raised from the dead with a glorified body and appeared to His disciples as the person who was with them before his crucifixion. He ascended into heaven and is now exalted at the right hand of God where He is the One Mediator, fully God, fully man, in whose Person is effected the reconciliation between God and Man. He will return in power and glory to judge the world and to consummate His redemptive mission. He now dwells in all believers as the living and ever present Lord.

C. God the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God, fully divine. He inspired holy men of old to write the Scriptures. Through illumination He enables men to understand truth. He exalts Christ. He convicts men of sin, of righteousness and of judgment. He calls men to the Savior, and effects regeneration. At the moment of regeneration He baptizes every believer into the Body of Christ. He cultivates Christian character, comforts believers and bestows the spiritual gifts by which they serve God through His church. He seals the believer unto the day of final redemption. His presence in the Christian is the guarantee that God will bring the believer into the fullness of the stature of Christ. He enlightens and empowers the believer and the church in worship, evangelism, and service.

SECTION 3: MAN

Man is the special creation of God, in His own image. He created them male and female as the crowning work of His creation. In the beginning man was innocent of sin and was endowed by His Creator with freedom of choice. By his free choice man sinned against God and brought sin into the human race. Through the temptation of Satan man transgressed the command of God and fell from his original innocence; whereby his posterity inherit a nature and an environment inclined toward sin. Therefore, as soon as they are capable of moral action, they become transgressors and are under condemnation. Only the grace of God can bring man into his holy fellowship and enabled man to fulfill the creative purpose of God. The sacredness of human personality is evident in that God created man in His own image, and in that Christ died for man; therefore every person of every race possesses full dignity and is worthy of respect and Christian love.

SECTION 4: SALVATION

Salvation involves the redemption of the whole man, and is offered freely to all who accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, who by His own blood obtained eternal redemption for the believer. In its broadest sense, salvation includes regeneration, justification, sanctification and glorification. There is no salvation apart from personal faith in Jesus Christ as Lord.

A. Regeneration, or the new birth, is a work of God's grace whereby believers become new creatures in Christ Jesus. It is change of heart wrought by the Holy Spirit through conviction of sin, to which the sinner responds in repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Repentance and faith are

inseparable experiences of grace. Repentance is a genuine turning from sin toward God. Faith is the acceptance of Jesus Christ and commitment of the entire personality to Him as Lord and Savior.

B. Justification is God's gracious and full acquittal upon principles of His righteousness of all sinners who repent and believe in Christ. Justification brings the believer into a relationship of peace and favor with God.

C. Sanctification is the experience, beginning in regeneration, by which the believer is set apart to God's purposes, and is enabled to progress toward moral and spiritual maturity through the presence and power of the Holy Spirit dwelling in him. Growth in grace should continue throughout the regenerate person's life.

D. Glorification is the culmination of salvation and is the final blessed and abiding state of the redeemed.

SECTION 5: GOD'S PURPOSE OF GRACE

Election is the gracious purpose of God, according to which He regenerates, justifies, sanctifies, and glorifies sinners. It is consistent with the free agency of man, and comprehends all the means in connection with the end. It is a glorious display of God's sovereign goodness, and is infinitely wise, holy, and unchangeable. It excludes boasting and promotes humility.

All true believers endure to the end. Those whom God has accepted in Christ, and sanctified by His Spirit, will never fall away from the state of grace, but shall persevere to the end. Believers may fall into sin through neglect and temptation, whereby they grieve the Spirit, impair their graces and comforts, **and** bring reproach to the cause of Christ, and temporal judgments upon themselves yet they shall be kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.

SECTION 6: THE CHURCH

A New Testament church of the Lord Jesus Christ is a an autonomous local congregation of baptized believers, associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel, observing the two ordinances of Christ, governed by His laws exercising the-gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by His Word, and seeking to extend the gospel to the ends of the earth. Each congregation operates under the Lordship of Christ through democratic processes. In such a congregation members are responsible and accountable to Christ as Lord. Its scriptural officers are pastors and deacons. While both men and women are gifted for service in the church, the office of pastor is limited to men as qualified by Scripture.

The New Testament speaks also of the church as the Body of Christ which includes all of the redeemed of all the ages believers from every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation.

SECTION 7: BAPTISM AND THE LORD'S SUPPER

Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. It is an act of obedience symbolizing the believer's faith in crucified, buried, and risen Savior, the believer's death to sin, the burial of the old life, and the resurrection to walk in newness of life in Christ Jesus. It is a testimony to his faith in the final resurrection of the dead. Being a church ordinance, it is prerequisite to the privileges of church membership and the Lord's Supper.

The Lord's Supper is a symbolic act of obedience whereby members of the church, through partaking of the bread and the fruit of the vine, memorialize the death of the Redeemer and anticipate His second coming.

SECTION 8: THE LORD'S DAY

The first day of the week is the Lord's Day. It is a Christian institution for regular observance. It commemorates the resurrection of Christ from the dead and should include exercises of worship and spiritual devotion, both public and private. Activities on the Lord's Day should be commensurate with the Christian's conscience under the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

SECTION 9: THE KINGDOM

The Kingdom of God includes both His general sovereignty over the universe and His particular kingship over men who willfully acknowledge Him as King. Particularly the Kingdom is the realm of salvation into which men enter by trustful, childlike commitment to Jesus Christ. Christians ought to pray and to labor that the Kingdom may come and God's will be done on Earth. The full consummation of the Kingdom awaits the return of Jesus Christ and the end of this age.

SECTION 10: LAST THINGS

God, in His own time and in His own way, will bring the world to its appropriate end. According to His promise, Jesus Christ will return personally and visible in glory to the earth; the dead will be raised; and Christ will judge all men in righteousness. The unrighteous will be consigned to Hell, the place of everlasting punishment. The righteous in their resurrected and glorified bodies will receive their reward and will dwell forever in Heaven with the Lord.

SECTION 11: EVANGELISM AND MISSIONS

It is the duty and privilege of every follower of Christ and of every church of the Lord Jesus Christ to endeavor to make disciples of all nations. The new birth of man's spirit by God's Holy Spirit means the birth of love for others. Missionary efforts on the part of all rests thus upon a spiritual necessity of the regenerate life, and is expressly and repeatedly commanded in the teachings of Christ. The Lord Jesus Christ has commanded the preaching of the gospel to all nations. It is the duty of every child of God to seek constantly to win the lost to Christ by verbal witness undergirded by a Christian lifestyle, and by all other methods in harmony with the gospel of Christ.

SECTION 12: EDUCATION

Christianity is the faith of enlightenment and intelligence. In Jesus Christ abide all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. All sound learning is, therefore, a part of our Christian heritage. The new birth opens all human faculties and creates a thirst for knowledge. Moreover, the cause of education in the Kingdom of Christ is coordinated with the cause of missions and general benevolence, and should receive along with these the liberal support of the churches. An adequate system of Christian education is necessary to a complete spiritual program for Christ's people. In Christian education there should be a proper balance between academic freedom and academic responsibility. Freedom in any orderly relationship of human life is always limited and never absolute. The freedom of a teacher in a Christian school, college or seminary is limited to the pre-eminence of Jesus Christ, by the authoritative nature of the Scriptures, and by the distinct purpose for which the school exists.

SECTION 13: STEWARDSHIP

God is the source of all blessings, temporal and spiritual; all that we have and are we owe to Him. Christians have a spiritual debtorship to the whole world, a holy trusteeship in the gospel, and a binding stewardship in their possessions. They are therefore, under obligation to serve Him with their time, talents, and material possessions; and should recognize all these as entrusted to them to use for the glory of God and for helping others. According to the Scriptures, Christians should contribute of their means cheerfully, regularly, systematically, proportionately and liberally for the advancement of the Redeemer's cause on earth.

SECTION 14: COOPERATION

Christ's people should, as occasion requires, organize such associations and conventions as may best secure cooperation for the great objects of the Kingdom of God. Such organizations have no authority over one another or over the churches. They are voluntary and advisory bodies designed to elicit, combine, and direct the energies of our people in the most effective manner. Members of New Testament churches should cooperate with one another in carrying forward the missionary educational and benevolent ministries for the extension of Christ's Kingdom. Christian unity in the New Testament sense is spiritual harmony and voluntary cooperation for common ends by various groups of Christ's people. Cooperation is desirable between the various Christian denominations, when the end to be attained is itself justified, and when such cooperation involves no violation of conscience or compromise of loyalty to Christ and His Word as revealed in the New Testament.

SECTION 15: THE CHRISTIAN AND THE SOCIAL ORDER

All Christians are under obligation to seek to make the will of Christ supreme in our own lives and in human society. Means and methods used for the improvement of society and the establishment of righteousness among men can be truly and permanently helpful only when they are rooted in the regeneration of the individual by the saving grace of God in Christ Jesus. The Christian should oppose in the spirit of Christ In the spirit of Christ, Christians should oppose racism, every form of greed, selfishness, and vice, and all forms of sexual immorality, including adultery, homosexuality, and pornography. We should work to provide for the orphaned, the needy, the abused-the aged, the helpless, and the sick. Every Christian should seek to bring industry, government, and society as a whole under

the sway of the principles of righteousness, truth, and brotherly love. In order to promote these ends, Christians should be ready to work with all men of good will in any good cause, always being careful to act in the spirit of love without compromising their loyalty to Christ and His truth.

SECTION 16: PEACE AND WAR

It is the duty of Christians to seek peace with all men on principles of righteousness. In accordance with the spirit and teachings of Christ, they should do all in their power to put an end to war. The true remedy for the war spirit is the gospel of our Lord. The supreme need of the world is the acceptance of His teachings in all the affairs of men and nations, and the practical application of His law of love. Christian people throughout the world should pray for the reign of the Prince of Peace.

SECTION 17: RELIGIOUS LIBERTY

God alone is Lord of the conscience, and He has left it free from the doctrines and commandments of men which are contrary to His Word or not contained in it. Church and state should be separate. The state owes to every church protection and full freedom in the pursuit of its spiritual ends. In providing for such freedom no ecclesiastical group or denomination should be favored by the state more than others. Civil government being ordained of God, it is the duty of Christians to render loyal obedience thereto in all things not contrary to the revealed will of God. The church should not resort to the civil power to carry on its work. The gospel of Christ contemplates spiritual means alone for the pursuit of its end. The state has no right to impose penalties for religious opinions of any kind. The state has no right to impose taxes for the support of any form of religion. A free church in a free state is the Christian ideal, and this implies the right of free and unhindered access to God on the part of all men, and the right to form and propagate opinions in the sphere of religion without interference by the civil power.

SECTION 18: THE FAMILY

God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society. It is composed of persons related to one another by marriage, blood, or adoption.

Marriage is the uniting of one man and one woman in covenant commitment for a lifetime. It is God's unique gift to reveal the union between Christ and His church and to provide for the man and the woman in marriage the framework for intimate companionship, the channel of sexual expression according to biblical standards, and the means for procreation of the human race. Any union outside of the definition of one man and one woman in a covenant of marriage is prohibited from being officiated in the building or on the grounds of Emmanuel Baptist Church in Great Cacapon, WV.

The husband and wife are of equal worth before God, since both are created in God's image. The marriage relationship models the way God relates to His people. A husband is to love his wife as Christ

loved the church. He has the God-given responsibility to provide for, to protect, and to lead his family. A wife is to submit herself graciously to the servant leadership of her husband even as the church willingly submits to the headship of Christ. She, being in the image of God as is her husband and thus equal to him, has the God-given responsibility to respect her husband and to serve as his helper in managing the household and nurturing the next generation.

Children, from the moment of conception, are a blessing and heritage from the Lord. Parents are to demonstrate to their children God's pattern for marriage. Parents are to teach their children spiritual and moral values and to lead them, through consistent lifestyle example and loving discipline, to make choices based on biblical truth. Children are to honor and obey their parents.

ARTICLE 4: CHARACTER

Section 1: Polity

The government of this church is vested in the body of believers who compose it. It is subject to the control of no other ecclesiastical body, but recognizes and sustains the obligations of mutual counsel and cooperation which is common among Baptist churches. The church recognizes no superior authority above its own membership except Christ as Head of the Church. Every member of the church shall have equal voice in determining all matters coming before the church for action unless otherwise provided by these bylaws. The business of the church shall be conducted according to Roberts Rules of Order (Revised) unless otherwise provided in these bylaws.

Section 2: Doctrine

This church receives the Scriptures as its authority in matters of faith and practice. Its understanding of Christian truths as contained therein is in essential accord with the belief of the Baptist Churches as indicated in the Articles of Faith, herewith.